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Who Is Baylan?

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A number of slicers have gained a twisted sort of prominence over the years. Reviled by authority and revered by disenfranchised youths, slicers are a community unto themselves. They have their own rules and their own codes of conduct, and the hierarchy that emerges among slicers is based not on personality, but on skill and respect for skill.

In Cularin and other systems away from the Core, one particular slicer - - Baylan - - has made quite a name for himself. Baylan takes jobs that interest him. If there's a way to circumvent or undermine authority, he tackles projects with an almost childlike glee. If a project doesn't involve undermining authority, he finds a way to make it do so. Every piece of code he's ever created has at least three "back doors" he can use to access it, somewhere down the line, in order to sow chaos.

While his motivations remain unclear, it has become apparent from his actions that Baylan has little interest in hurting anyone. Instead, he seeks to tear down the structures that sacrifice individual achievement in favor of corporate or governmental success. A fervent believer in the doctrine that individuals of all species should have the chance to make unique contributions to the greater good, Baylan works to put people in control of their own destinies. He seeks to free them from what he sees as "the oppression of the many by the few"?.

Who he is and what he looks like remain mysteries. Baylan has no interest in what limited celebrity he has been granted, content to live - - safe and secure - - as far from watchful eyes as he can get.

The following are quotations archived on the Holonet that are attributed to Baylan. Whether or not he actually said them remains a mystery, though there is a certain consistency to the writing style. The philosophy espoused seems to correspond to his behavior very well.

MSG 10771-223A

If government is such a good idea, why does everyone have a different idea of what's good? Listen to the politicians some time. Really listen to them. Count how many words come out of their mouths between meaningful thoughts. Boil down their ideas to their basic elements and see if there are any elements left. The fact is, the people that governments serve don't have a single blasted thing to do with the governments. You aren't being served; you're serving.

MSG 1229181-7

I was on Coruscant recently. It doesn't matter why. One of the things I did was take a tour of the area around the Jedi Temple. You see it in the holovids and you think it's going to be impressive. And in some ways, I guess it is. But in others, it's just a building. The people who live and work there are just like us. They're people. They live. They go to work. Maybe they think about their jobs differently than you or I do. Maybe they don't. I bet Jedi have good days and bad days. You see their temple and think, "This is where the people who are supposed to protect the galaxy live? This is it?" It looks too small to protect the galaxy. Pack it so full of bodies that every person inside liquefies and you still don't have enough room for all the protectors we need. Things are a mess. If we count on the Jedi to save us, we're all going to die.

MSG 23197656.A2

The Senate is full of bloated, self-important bureaucrats who couldn't find their own planets from orbit. They care more about their pensions than they do about their people. If there was one thing the Separatists got right - - and that's a big "if" - - it was leaving the Senate behind. Of course, politicians are creatures of habit, so they'll probably just end up creating a new Senate that they will call something else. Or maybe they'll just call it the Senate, and pretend that they're the only ones. The self-delusional abilities of politicians never cease to amaze me.

MSG 963148.ZwwZ

So, last week I was tearing down the communications infrastructure for DeSKo, and I realized something, although it took me a while to figure out what it was. Nutshell: No matter how many corps get torn down, no matter how many times I take credits from some rich Twi'lek's accounts and disburse it to random accounts, the rich people will get rich again. I'm not sure why I bother. Why doesn't someone DO SOMETHING with the credits that suddenly end up in their accounts? So I monitored what your average Human does when an extra thousand credits shows up in his account. Know what he does? Nothing. He sits and hopes no one notices. Five-thousand? Ten? Same. There are a few you can do that to who'll cancel the account and transfer all the funds somewhere they think is safe. But that's NOT THE POINT. The point is, you have to give people the chance to do something. I don't make lives. I give people a start to making their own life. The average person is so WHIPPED by the establishment that he can't even think about making his own life better. It's sad. I'm not going to quit, though. If the rich get richer while I'm stealing from them, they'd own the bloody galaxy if I didn't.

MSG 882A995

If you whine long enough, someone will eventually hear you. If you keep whining after you're heard, someone will eventually shoot you.

MSG 119192920518.0

There are no dumb questions. No, check that. "How do you become a slicer?" That's a dumb question. Last time I got that, I told the joker who asked

that I had a special test that I'd made up, and that if he wanted to be a slicer, he had to pass it. So now he's on year five of his sentence. I think by this point he's probably figured out that he's not a slicer.

MSG 8712.A19

The level of control necessary to maintain safety and prosperity in a society is inversely proportional to the level of technology in that society. In low-tech societies, every person is immediately interdependent with every other person. If Baylan doesn't kill a rancor this afternoon, Baylan's family doesn't eat tonight. It therefore is everyone's best interests that Baylan haul his sorry carcass out of bed, pull on his boots, grab his spear, and go hunt the rancor. The more technology you get, the less people have to rely on each other and the less oversight there needs to be of any individual. Watch the machines. Design them well enough, and you don't need to pay attention to the people so much. Trust that the thought-work can be done by the people, and the machines will do the hunter-gatherer flop that people never have seemed all that wild about to start. If you want proof that I'm right, just look at our society. Lots of technology -- lightspeed communication -- and yet there are more controls on us than ever. That's not right.

MSG 16622.XHT

Brilliance cannot exist in groups. It exists only in individuals. Put a brilliant person in a group, and that person is dulled. He must slow himself down to the level of the peons he's forced to endure. I don't claim to be the most brilliant person to ever live. Not out loud, at least. But I've been a lot of places and seen a lot of things, and I know for a fact that every time I've tried to work with someone else, I've gotten dragged down. It's probably the case that there's someone out there who I'd drag down, if I worked with her. I just haven't met her (or him, I guess), yet. But that's the nature of things. Unless everyone in a group is exactly the same, the fools of the group will come out looking not so foolish, and the geniuses will come out looking like fools.

Baylan, Human Male Scoundrel 8/Outlaw Slicer 10: Init +0; Defense 20 (+10 class); Spd 10 m; VP/WP 56/11; Atk +10/+5/+0 melee or +11/+6/+1 ranged (3d6+2/19-20, +2 mastercraft blaster pistol with targeting sight); SQ Illicit barter, lucky (2/day), precise attack +1, false identity, bonus class skill (Diplomacy), slicer specialization (+2 to Break Computer Security, +4 to Alter Program), skill mastery (Computer Use, Repair); SV Fort +4, Ref +11, Will +11; SZ M; FP 3; DSP 0; Rep +5; Str 8, Dex 10, Con 8, Int 24, Wis 14, Cha 12.

Equipment: Cybernetics (Biotech Borg Construct AJ*6 with 5 datacard slots and custom interface for handheld computer; encrypted subcutaneous comlink; cybernetic eye (optical enhancer, +3 on search checks [included above]), +3 mastercraft custom handheld computer (+7 equipment bonus to Computer Use checks; does not stack with AJ*6 bonus), +2 mastercraft blaster pistol with targeting sight (sight increases threat range by 1 point), belt with miscellaneous chips, datacards, and small tools; protocol droid (Q-410).

Skills: Bluff +23 (+25 with droids), Computer Use +33 (+38 to conduct basic searches; +43 when using custom handheld; +45 to Break Computer Security using custom handheld; +47 to Alter Programs using custom handheld), Craft (Computers) +15, Craft (Cybernetics) +15, Craft (Droids) +16, Craft

(Electronic Device) +16, Diplomacy +18 (+20 with droids; +23 to buy or sell illegal goods; +25 to buy or sell illegal goods with droids), Disable Device +28 (+31 to bypass or disable computer security), Forgery +26, Gather Information +28, Knowledge (Bureaucracy) +17, Knowledge (Engineering) +17, Knowledge (History) +15, Knowledge (Medicine) +13, Knowledge (Physics) +17, Knowledge (Spacer Lore) +12, Knowledge (Streetwise) +15, Knowledge (Technology) +29, Repair +33, Search +20, Spot +15; Read/Write Basic, Read/Write Binary, Read/Write Bothan, Read/Write Cerean, Read/Write Duros, Read/Write Huttese, Read/Write Jawa Trade Language, Speak Basic, Speak Bothan, Speak Duros, Speak Jawa Trade Language, Understand Binary.

Feats: Binary Influence, Fame, Gearhead, Heroic Surge (4/day), Iron Will, Kit-Bashing, Perfect Memory, Skill Emphasis (Computer Use), Skill Emphasis (Knowledge [Technology]), Skill Emphasis (Repair), Street Smart, Toughness, Trustworthy, Weapon Proficiency (simple weapons, blaster pistols).

Binary Influence

You have a particular knack for working with droids and dealing with complex (often recalcitrant) computer systems.

Prerequisites: Intelligence 17, Read/Write Binary, Craft (Droids) 8 ranks, Computer Use 12 ranks.

Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus to Bluff, Diplomacy, and Sense Motive checks when dealing with droids. In addition, you gain a +3 bonus when conducting complex searches, altering programs, and breaking computer security (see the Computer Use skill description for details).

Slicer Lore

A new use for the Knowledge (technology) skill

Check: As with the general Knowledge (technology) skill (detailed in the Star Wars Roleplaying Game revised core rulebook), simple questions regarding famous slicers have a DC of 10, basic questions have a DC of 15, advanced questions have a DC of 20, and particularly obscure questions about slicers who remain safely anonymous may have DCs as high as 30 or 40.

Retry: No. You know it or you don't.

Special: Datacards on slicer lore are notoriously inaccurate. There is a 90 percent probability that any datacard purporting to provide facts about slicer lore will actually contain wrong information. When this is the case, the Gamemaster should secretly assign a penalty of 1d12 to any Knowledge (technology) check regarding slicer lore made utilizing this datacard; the penalty should be rolled secretly when the card is found by the heroes.

As with any Knowledge check, the DCs above represent general guidelines subject to alteration by the GM. At the GM's discretion, rolls to recall information about a particular slicer may be adjusted upward or downward by (10 minus the target slicer's Reputation score) to reflect relative difficulty or ease of access to information. Characters with significant backgrounds in slicer communities may receive other bonuses or penalties as befits a situation.

Time: A Knowledge (technology) check can be used as a reaction, but generally requires a minimum of a full-round action.